R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 013 647 JC 670 898

GUIDE TO PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR JUNIOR COLLEGES, MONOGRAPH C-8.

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PUB DATE MAR 61

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$1.76 44P.

DESCRIPTORS- *JUNIOR COLLEGES, *PUBLIC RELATIONS, *COMMUNITY ATTITUDES, *PROMOTION (PUBLICIZE), COMMUNICATIONS, *SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP,

THE AUTHOR DEFINES PUBLIC RELATIONS AND DESCRIBES ITS RECIPROCAL VALUE TO THE COLLEGE AND ITS "PUBLICS." THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, WHETHER STAFFED BY FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL OR BY OUTSIDE EXPERTS, MUST BE ABLE (1) ASSEMBLE ITS FACTS ON (A) THE COLLEGE GOALS, (B) AREAS OF PUBLIC IGNORANCE, (C) JUSTIFIED CRITICISM, AND (D) AVAILABLE RESOURCES, (2) BLUEPRINT ITS TARGET IN ORDER TO SET UP (A) ITS ORGANIZATIONAL CHANNELS, (B) ITS PHYSICAL FACILITIES, AND (C) ITS SOURCES OF INFORMATION, AND (3) MAKE FULL USE OF SUCH SOURCES OF INFORMATION AS (A) FACULTY, (B) CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, (C) ADMINISTRATION, (D) STUDENTS, (E) CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL, (F) COLLEGE EVENTS, AND (G) COMMUNITY SERVICES. TO ACCOMPLISH THESE THREE MAJOR TASKS, THE PUBLIC RELATIONS STAFF MUST (1) SELECT SUITABLE TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF COMMUNICATION, (2) STRESS INSERVICE TRAINING OF PERSONNEL, AND (3) CONSTANTLY REVIEW, EVALUATE, AND REVISE THE PROGRAM ACCORDING TO ITS SUCCESS IN MEETING ITS OBJECTIVES. THE STAFF MUST RECOGNIZE THAT IT HAS TO RECEIVE AS WELL AS DISSEMINATE INFORMATION. A CHECKLIST OF STEPS FOR SETTING UP A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM IS INCLUDED. THIS DOCUMENT IS AVAILABLE FROM SOUTH-WESTERN PUBLISHING CO., 11 GUITTARD RD., BURLINGAME, CALIF. 94010. (HH)

ED013647

GUIDE TO PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR JUNIOR COLLEGES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

OCT 23 1967

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

Monograph C-8
SOUTH-WESTERN PUBLISHING CO.

JC 670 898

GUIDE TO PUBLIC RELATIONS
FOR JUNIOR COLLEGES

MONOGRAPH C-8

By

ALEXANDER N. STRELOFF

Assisted by an Advisory Committee of
The California Junior College Association

Under a Grant from
Standard Oil Company of California

Published March, 1961

H261

SOUTH-WESTERN PUBLISHING CO.

(Specialists in Business and Economic Education)

Cincinnati 27 New Rochelle, N. Y. Chicago 44 Dallas 2 Burlingame, Calif.

(Printed in U. S. A.)

FUNCTIONS OF JUNIOR COLLEGES

A College Transfer Program **equivalent to the lower-division curricula of state universities and colleges for those who plan to continue their education at an advanced level.**

An Occupational Education Program **for those individuals for whom two years or less of training will give an understanding of the community and the world in which they live, and which will provide them with the opportunity to acquire specific skills leading to employment or advancement on the job.**

A Program of General Education **which provides, through planned experiences, the common knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed by each student to be effective as a person, a family member, a worker, and a citizen.**

A Guidance Program **which provides for vocational, educational, and personal counseling to assist the student in the selection and pursuit of a life work compatible with his interests, aptitudes, and abilities.**

A Program of Community Services, **provided in cooperation with the other educational institutions serving the community, to meet the cultural, educational, and vocational needs of interested people living in the community.**

—Adapted from the Restudy of Higher Education in California and the Master Plan of Higher Education in California.

FOREWORD

The California Junior College Association and Standard Oil Company of California have established a cooperative relationship in recognition of the important place of the public junior colleges in California's system of higher education. Through this, a continuing series of projects are being accomplished by means of assistance from the Company.

A committee of the California Junior College Association and Company personnel meets periodically to plan or review these projects. The first of these was a pilot program to encourage the taking of college courses by highly capable high school seniors who were enrolled part time in nearby junior colleges. Its success contributed to passage of legislation that has made such programs a permanent part of California higher education.

The "Guide to Public Relations for Junior Colleges" is the second project. It was selected by the committee in the belief that there is still much misunderstanding concerning junior colleges. Accordingly, a subcommittee was named to prepare a guide—the Company making available the services of a professional writer.

The California Junior College Association expresses its grateful appreciation for the interest and assistance that Standard Oil Company of California is giving by these means to junior college education in California.

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PREFACE

This booklet was written to provide junior colleges with a brief, informal, introductory guide to school public relations.

Principles and selected examples of mechanics and organization are presented, and some policy issues are discussed. Attention also is directed to the purposes and critical importance to education of an effective, two-way program of communication with the community. And there are suggestions of the vital nature of the principal public relations messages.

Because of the vast scope of the field of public relations, this booklet must fall far short of being a complete manual of instruction. It is best used as an introductory guide. Particularly for those whose practice of public relations has been limited, a great deal more study certainly will be necessary. A short bibliography is provided.

The author acknowledges with profound gratitude the repeated counsel and substantial assistance provided by the members of the California Junior College Association's public relations handbook subcommittee, including:

Walter T. Coultas, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Extension and Higher Education, Los Angeles City Schools; Dr. Esther R. Davis, Director of Community Relations, Los Angeles Valley College, Van Nuys; Stuart Dufour, Vice President, Hartnell College, Salinas; John W. Dunlap, Community Relations Director, Santa Ana College, Santa Ana; Ervin L. Harlacher, Director, Information and Community Services, Foothill College, Los Altos; Richard P. Hafner, Jr., Special Assistant to the Director, State Department of Education, Sacramento; Dr. Frederick R. Huber, President, Monterey Peninsula College, Monterey; Dr. Allison J. McNay, Coordinator, School and College Relations, and Robert G. Randolph, Assistant Supervisor, Education Section, Standard Oil Company of California; and Dr. Henry T. Tyler, Executive Secretary, California Junior College Association.

The author's time was made available for the project by a grant from Standard Oil Company of California. The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author and the educators on the committee.

A.N.S.

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CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS "PUBLIC RELATIONS"—AND WHY?

TERMS NEED DEFINITIONS

There is no agreement on a common definition for the great variety of human activities which have been commonly accepted as "public relations." In each application—from the sublime to the downright fraudulent—it is necessary to clarify the definition.

Altering terms from "public relations" to "public information" or "community relations" does not contribute to understanding without additional explanation.

For the purposes of this publication, the terms "public relations," "public information," and "community relations" may be used interchangeably. They are defined as those college initiated activities which (1) further public understanding of education and (2) provide college authorities with an understanding of public opinion in order to help the college improve its educational functions in society.

We must recognize that unfavorable connotations have been associated with some forms of "public relations." Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize that, although a junior college information program must be as planned and purposeful as any other educational process, there can be no toleration of attempts to engineer artificial images in order to gain consent from a deluded public.

High standards of public responsibility in school information programs are dictated both by morality and practicality. Because of each college's intimate relationship with its two most immediate publics—faculty and students—any suggestion of deception is certain to be exposed with disastrous effects on the school's entire public relations program.

The fact that deception is both undesirable and impossible suggests that even the most ingenious public relations program cannot be successful unless the college is in fact providing quality education. Junior college public relations is not a device for whitewashing the unacceptable. But properly utilized, a public relations program strengthens a college's ability to provide quality education.

Although we tend to think of public relations primarily as communication *to* the public in order to gain public understanding and support, communication *from* the public is equally important. An appreciation by college authorities of the opinions and needs of responsible publics can help develop constructive policies and practices. At the least, communication *from* the public disturbs complacency and forces a searching self-appraisal of the college's educational program.

WHY PUBLIC RELATIONS?

Without public support, there would be no public schools in a democracy. Public support for education must be preceded by favorable public understanding. The development and nurturing of favorable public understanding about education is school public relations.

It is evident that the objectives of a tax-supported educational system in a democracy can be achieved only upon a foundation of effective public relations—or "public information" or "community relations," if you prefer to use another term.

Admittedly, in some cases even highly successful public relations results from informal and unplanned activities by people acting intuitively. A superior teacher or administrator is almost certain to be superior in his communications with the public about the functions of education. Nevertheless, there is too much

at stake to permit chance and intuition to dictate the level of public understanding and opinion about education. The ultimate objectives of the junior college system are more safely, completely, and efficiently achieved if the necessary public information work is planned and coordinated.

EXTENT OF THE PROGRAM

As will be amplified later in this booklet, the need for conscious planning and coordination is not necessarily associated with a program of great scope.

In some very small colleges, the realities of limited resources will compel school authorities to omit many desirable activities. The conduct of various aspects of the public relations program may be distributed among a number of individuals, with the president personally providing the planning and coordination.

In larger institutions, the president may assign planning, coordination, and many specific duties to a part-time or full-time community relations director.

But although the organization and the scope of each program must be designed to suit the particular situation, public relations objectives are rarely achieved without some form of planning and coordination. Public relations activities which "jus' grow" like Topsy are at best wasteful of resources. More commonly, a "Topsy" program achieves practically nothing in the face of crucial problems and critical needs.

NO TIME TO LOSE

With the beginning of the space age there was an awakening interest in many phases of American education. The added emphasis which schools subsequently placed on basic subjects suggests that some of the concern may have been well founded. Whether or not the continuing comment is justified does not alter the fact that criticism exists—and continues to hold public attention.

Never before in our history has there been such general interest and controversy about education. In proper perspective, however, the arousing of interest can be seen as very beneficial, since it provides schools with an opportunity to achieve greater public understanding and support.

As every teacher knows, one of the first hurdles to communication is simply getting the attention of the audience. American education certainly has the attention of the American public today. Intellectually active people are practically demanding answers to the issues which have been raised.

It is not enough for educators to know the answers. Nor will the lay public be reassured with authoritarian generalizations. In a society in which democracy is a way of life as well as a form of government, the public needs to know and has the right to know the facts about its schools. And the schools have an obligation to explain.

WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS TO KNOW

Most of the controversial questions being asked come under two categories:

1. Are American schools providing quality education?
2. Are school dollars being spent efficiently?

Schools cannot deny or ignore the fact that the public is disturbed by repeated charges of poor quality of education, unnecessary activities, misguided principles, and nonprofessional attitudes on the part of some school people. There is evident conflict between school systems and even within some school systems. Educators themselves are expressing their dissatisfaction both privately and publicly. If not resolved by a positive program of public information, the confusion and conflict can result in a general loss of public confidence in American education and educators. American education faces a crisis in public opinion.

PROGRESS IN EDUCATION IS NOT INEVITABLE

It cannot be assumed that the educational system which now exists is secure or must progress. Unless the educational system is soundly built on the foundations of favorable public understanding, much of what has been erected could be swept away in the emotional storms that accompany an economic crisis.

Even without severe economic pressure, criticism which is permitted to go unanswered tends to win public support—and sometimes for changes harmful to education.

JUNIOR COLLEGES HAVE SPECIAL PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEMS

The current school controversy affects all sectors of the educational system, but junior colleges have additional problems that are peculiar to this relatively new institution.

Although there were a few junior colleges a half century ago, the great expansion has taken place during recent years. Furthermore, the junior colleges in the past frequently were associated with high schools through both common facilities and faculty. They often were thought of as incidental in the scheme of higher education.

Today, by contrast, California's tripartite system of public higher education recognizes that junior colleges must play a major role in higher education, and merit equal status with four-year colleges.

Under the concept of generally extending public education beyond high school to meet the needs of our increasingly complex society, California junior colleges have the responsibility for educating the majority of students in the first two years beyond high school.

ROLE NOT UNDERSTOOD

Unfortunately the functions and purposes of the junior college system are not well understood. Because the system is relatively new, the public is not as thoroughly or as accurately informed about junior colleges as about other educational institutions. There is, perhaps, also an instinctive public hesitancy about new tax-supported institutions. But most serious of all are the indications that even among educators there is considerable difference of opinion about the functions and contributions of the junior colleges. There are frequently heard interpretations which deny that junior colleges deserve recognition as institutions of higher learning which provide quality instruction.

The successful operation of any junior college depends upon eliminating such interpretations and establishing prestige—both for the college and for its faculty. We should note, however, that such prestige can be established only when (1) excellence is a fact, and (2) the facts of excellence are communicated effectively to the public.

Conveying a clear and complete picture of the goals and functions of a junior college to the public is further complicated by the fact that there are variations in emphasis among the colleges of different communities. There is evident need for better public understanding of how junior colleges are adapted to meet the particular needs of individual communities, while retaining at a high level the universal functions of higher education.

In working for better public appreciation of the benefits of junior college education, the college must go beyond demonstrating the personal benefits to individual students. Even the childless citizen can be helped to realize how he receives tangible returns from the proper education of all Americans, upon whom he depends for wise judgments and productive talents.

Because of the communications difficulties and because of the measurable contribution to the local tax burden, junior colleges are particularly vulnerable to negative trends in community attitudes. A single, unfavorable local election could greatly curtail the operations of a junior college.

CHAPTER 2

THE PEOPLE INVOLVED

A DO-IT-YOURSELF PROJECT

Some California junior colleges have extensive, well-planned and well-coordinated public relations programs. On the other hand, there seem to be many instances of colleges with practically no program or with a program which is deficient even in terms of what is possible with limited resources. The limited programs of a number of schools apparently are excellent.

The instances of inadequate public relations apparently are due not so much to shortage of means as to lack of a sense of urgency and to uncertainty about just how to set up and launch a plan of public relations. It has been suggested that the colleges have need for a comprehensive blueprint.

This publication cannot provide a packaged program. Although it offers some specific suggestions and is a general guide, it does not attempt to provide a universal, detailed blueprint for setting up and operating a public relations program in every college. Thoughtful individual planning is an essential preliminary in each case. The individuals charged with the junior college's public relations must bear the burden of analyzing the school's problems and available resources and then of formulating goals, organization and procedures.

Plans must be individualized because:

1. Each college has peculiarities in problems, facilities, purposes, and existing organization and activities.

2. The field of public relations is so vast that probably no college can hope to operate a complete program. The efficient and effective planner thus makes a judicious selection of the most productive activities which can be maintained by available resources.

3. The very process of preparing the individualized blueprint vitalizes the program. Productive thinking is generated. Participants acquire new knowledge as they research educational issues and the broad field of public communication. Individuals who will have key positions in the operating organization tend to develop strong personal interest in projects they have helped plan.

PRESIDENT IS RESPONSIBLE

Although the president may delegate various functions of the community relations program to representatives he considers qualified, ultimately he is solely responsible for public relations—just as he is for all other operations of the college.

In the final accounting, the college's public relations is a direct reflection of the top administrator's knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and supervisory abilities.

The president's function is crucial in both the organization and operation of the program. Even though he may not be involved in the details, it is very valuable for him to have considerable knowledge of techniques and a sound insight into public relations principles and practices. In public relations, the top administrator cannot resort to the type of extreme delegation which is unconcerned with anything except measuring results.

The results of a public relations effort are so difficult to segregate and measure objectively that the exercise of administrative judgment and supervision by the president requires that he be able to evaluate the activities themselves.

When activities are not strictly measurable, there is a universal tendency for the activities to stray from objectives and to be conducted primarily for the sake of appearances.

The president's ability to evaluate the productiveness of a public relations plan or activity is at least as important as his contributions to policy and operating procedure.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIRECTOR—A COORDINATOR

Even in a small institution which cannot afford to assign public relations as the major activity of any single individual, the president inevitably will delegate various public relations functions to members of his staff. In limited programs, the president may retain the duty of coordinating the public relations aspects of such delegated activities as news service, publications, community services, speakers' bureau, public events, and citizens' committees.

As the college's resources grow and permit the program to expand, the president will be forced to delegate the coordination of the total program to a part-time or full-time "community relations director." (There are a dozen variations on the title.)

Duties also will vary according to the way the program has evolved. In some situations the community relations director and his staff may operate all phases of a program. More typically, even as a full-time administrator, the director acts primarily as a coordinator and catalyst for public relations activities which are largely under the direct administration of various department heads—although some activities will be directly under his jurisdiction.

But regardless of how the direct supervision of various duties may be divided, the president or his community relations director should be clearly recognized as coordinating the total program.

A weak program is inevitable if the president should become too occupied to coordinate public relations himself, and yet neglects to delegate this function to any one individual.

Of course, the effectiveness of the community relations director cannot derive simply from the president's appointment. He must also have knowledge, understanding, skills, and stature. A qualified director should require only presidential review, certainly not day-to-day direction and stimulation.

As the public relations and communications expert on the administrative staff, he should have a place on the executive cabinet. His counsel should be readily available at top administrative conferences. He should be in immediate and close contact with the college's problems, policies, and trends.

In private industry there is continuing debate regarding the key qualifications necessary for administering a public relations program. On the one hand, there is a tendency to stress the desirability of a background in social studies rather than journalism, particularly because of the increasing concern with sociology and the psychological factors of motivation. On the other hand, the techniques of communication occupy so large a proportion of the time of most public relations directors that journalism experience is considered essential by many administrators.

Certainly, there is strong argument on both sides and the ideal director of community relations should have a broad background of knowledge and experience in education, psychology, sociology, and communications.

This paragon must also be enterprising, creative, energetic, honest, and an efficient administrator. And he must have the personality, background, and professional standing to work effectively with the press, educators, students, and key members of target publics.

Without depending upon authority, he must have the capacity for inspiring hundreds of informal expressions of good public relations by everybody on campus.

In some junior colleges the director must also be qualified to head the department of mass communication, including journalism, advertising, public relations, and TV and radio.

Because of his expertness in the field, he may be given supervision of the college printing office and all outside printing for the college.

As one of his primary functions, he must have the capacity to provide the actual leadership in the college's public relations committee.

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The organizational core of the college's community relations program is the public relations committee. The membership should include key administrators, department heads, and each individual who has jurisdiction over some major public relations activity. The president should be chairman, although the director of community relations as vice chairman probably will conduct most of the meetings.

The public relations committee functions best when it meets regularly and provides the primary organization for two-way communication and for coordinating the public relations activities of the entire college. At the least, it should assist the community relations director with counsel for planning and review.

CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The president and the community relations director can receive valuable assistance from an advisory committee consisting of public relations and mass communications specialists in the community. In addition to being able to contribute a fresh, outside viewpoint and technical advice, the members of the advisory committee can be expected to assist in operations, particularly through personal introductions to key individuals in the community.

THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM—AND "THE PUBLIC"

The communications process in college public relations does not simply separate everybody into two groups: communicators and listeners. Instead, each person is successively both a member of the public relations team and a member of a target public.

The student or faculty member who receives a public relations message is a member of a target public. But he is immediately transformed into a member of the communications team when he passes on that message to his family and friends.

Both information and motivation are passed on like the chain of a bucket brigade. A public relations activity which energizes such a chain reaction multiplies the original effort. Concentrate on projects which multiply. Get everybody working for the college.

"THE PUBLIC" IS PLURAL

Except for rhetorical convenience there is no such identity as "The Public." Instead, there are many "Publics." Each group with a common interest may be considered a separate public—but only to the extent of the subject of common interest.

The members of a medical society who tend to have a common opinion about socialized medicine may be completely at odds with each other on the issues of federal aid to education. In addressing any group, think of its members as a unit only from the point of view which caused them to unite.

Essentially, "The Public" consists of individuals. Appeal to them as individuals. In presenting an argument to individuals, we are wise to concentrate

on the motivations of self-interest. But we also must recognize that people frequently misunderstand how their self-interest is affected.

In addition, we must never forget the power of altruism and spiritual values upon individuals and groups. These nonmaterial factors take on added force in the formation of opinion when they are shown not to be in conflict with material self-interest.

And in dealing with the public primarily as individuals, it is disastrous to ignore personality factors. We are barely skirting the springs of human motivation in these paragraphs, but we had better give particular notice to pride and vanity. Logical appeals often flounder on the reefs of injured personal feelings. Often, for example, an important and otherwise well conceived public affair can result in bad public relations if dignitaries are not properly recognized.

The focus of the college's appeal to the various publics is the self interest of every individual in a strong educational system, plus the special appeals to the common interests of the individual groups.

There are hundreds of ways of grouping your "Publics." Here is a partial list:

INTERNAL PUBLICS

Board of Trustees
Administrative staff
Instructors, day and night divisions
Students, full time, part time, and adult
Classified personnel
Part time employees
Parents, families of students
Faculty wives and children
Alumni
Retired faculty

EXTERNAL PUBLICS

High school faculties
High school students and families
High school PTA's
Four-year college faculties and students
Community neighbors
Civic and service groups
Business, farm, and industrial associations
Labor unions
Major business and industrial firms
State, city, and county government
Editors, reporters, and broadcasting station managers
Church organizations
Youth clubs
Veterans organizations
Political parties
Spectators at athletic events
Audiences at concerts and lectures
Ethnic groups
Professionals

PRIORITIES IN "PUBLICS"

The principal purpose of this list is to suggest the great variety of "Publics" to which special appeals could be made. To avoid the confusion of profusion in

directing messages, be selective. Establish priorities. You will soon find yourself concentrating on those groups which have evidenced the most concern with education, particularly within your college.

Seek out the intellectually active publics who already are discussing education. Give special attention to hostile groups who are active sources of public misunderstanding.

However, it might be better strategy first to develop your own greatest sources of support and strengthen your closest allies through an even greater development of their understanding and enthusiasm. Thus, initially, your information program will be devoted principally to your internal publics: faculty and students and their families, the alumni and the Board of Trustees.

Next, develop those groups and individuals who directly influence the opinions of many others: editors and reporters, high school faculties, four-year college faculties and students, groups of substantial membership who are directly concerned with school affairs, and individuals who are recognized as community leaders.

The mass of the population may take relatively little interest in the college, but it is a potential force. Its opinions tend to be formed by the more active intellects in their environment, the "grass roots leaders."

Particularly in college public relations, it would be very ill-advised to underestimate the intelligence of any public. Among the intelligent uneducated are some of education's staunchest friends. It is possible to clarify complex issues without "talking down." Any public in time will detect and resent a patronizing attitude.

CHAPTER 3

START WITH THE FACTS

BUILD A FOUNDATION

Just as it is essential to plan before you act, it is necessary to get the facts before you plan. This may seem elementary, but very commonly both fact finding and planning are passed over in the rush to get things done. Without proper foundations and direction a public relations program is not likely to accomplish much, regardless of the total amount of energy expended.

Of course, throughout the program we must face up to the realities of limited resources. Every step of the program inevitably involves a compromise short of the ideal, and certainly major compromises must be made in the area of fact finding. Nevertheless, even a rough evaluation of the situation may be adequate for your purposes, if you are sensitive and intelligent about the limitations of your procedures.

For example, a scientific opinion poll involving depth interviews is expensive, and few schools can afford an extensive survey even occasionally. Nevertheless, the colleges must keep a finger on the pulse of the public constantly. The solution lies in a common sense approach. Even some of the professional motivational research authorities will admit the validity of restricted and informal surveys by individuals knowledgeable about the relevant issues.

Thus, in trying to evaluate the problems which are uppermost in the minds of the publics in your community, become acquainted with the results of some of the professional polls of public opinion regarding education. The results may not be valid in your community, but you at least will have the questions in mind to confirm or reject. Once you are aware of the issues, you will soon find repeated evidence from which to draw conclusions.

Take full advantage of community wide surveys in which education is one of the subjects covered. Professional business climate surveys financed by a city, chamber of commerce or industrial development association usually include extensive consideration of educational facilities and problems, and even of community attitudes toward education. By working closely with persons conducting the survey, the college often can have the survey expanded to cover points of interest to the college. Also, by being closely involved in the survey, the college is assured of the accuracy of the final report.

If you can afford it occasionally, check your own conclusions by means of a professional poll of community opinion on a limited number of issues. Get professional advice on improving your own polling techniques.

Be exceedingly careful about how you formulate the questions around the perennial issues. Even a quick reading of one of the many books on polling techniques will help you avoid the most common errors. Then carry out some interviews yourself with a few representative individuals to pretest your questionnaire.

If you do not have the trained personnel to probe subconscious reactions through depth interviews, don't be concerned. You probably can learn enough at the conscious, rational level.

Personal interviews are desirable, but don't ignore written questionnaires and telephone polls. Strong reactions will become evident very quickly.

Watch newspaper editorials and letters to the editor for opinions. Keep a file of verbal and written complaints. Keep constantly alert to impressions, and make a record of them.

Above all, guard against your own prejudices affecting the final conclusion. Remember how easy it is to delude yourself. Don't overestimate your technical

competence in the field. Qualified professional opinion researchers do have special knowledge, which can be worth their fees.

Of course, even the most scientific and accurate poll is valueless if you are not prepared to accept the results. There must be willingness to face unpleasant facts, for they often are the most important ones to know. On the other hand, don't be too negative. Be able to recognize favorable factors, especially accomplishments and practices which come easily and are taken for granted.

FOUR AREAS FOR FACT FINDING

Whether you use formal or informal polling techniques, committee discussions, or personal surveys, your fact finding will fall into four areas:

I—WHAT ARE THE COLLEGE'S ULTIMATE AND INTERMEDIATE GOALS?

This is the foundation of your fact finding. You must first coordinate your community relations activities with the over-all objectives of the college. What are the broad, ultimate goals of the college? What are the intermediate "stepping stone goals" needed to achieve the college's ultimate goals?

You will find yourself making a list at the top of which will be statements of ultimate purpose in philosophical terms. As you examine those ultimate purposes closely, you may be surprised to discover how controversial they really are. (That is why we are not attempting to offer examples here.)

Next down the list will be obvious requirements for achieving the ultimate goals: superior faculty, qualified students, adequate facilities, and financial and moral support from the community.

The list will then become increasingly specific. You'll find some intermediate goals which are achieved, but not so securely that they can be taken for granted. For example, your college may thus far have been getting community support in terms of favorable votes on school issues, but opinion surveys may reveal a marginal attitude which could easily turn negative. Or perhaps the school's prestige with present and potential faculty and students is precariously balanced. The revelation of such facts would signal a corrective program of community relations.

As you continue to build your list, you will also disclose many intermediate objectives clearly not yet achieved. Your college may need a new science laboratory, a library, or additional parking facilities. Perhaps some items on the list will be intangible; for example, the need for closer coordination between vocational classes and related industries.

In the first area of fact finding, you are concerned with goals, both ultimate and intermediate, much as they would be listed by the president of the college without immediately concerning himself with solutions, through public relations or other means. The next two areas of fact finding will seek ways in which the college's community relations program can contribute to achievement of the goals already determined.

II—WHAT ARE THE MAIN POINTS OF PUBLIC MISUNDERSTANDING AND IGNORANCE ABOUT THE COLLEGE?

First, cast around for general reactions concerning the college without reference to the college's goals. What are the relevant opinions among various groups? Get a sound, general impression before you narrow your questioning to issues more closely related to goals. Ultimately, you will get a list of amazing misconceptions. Don't be surprised if you discover shocking distortions which are widely believed.

Check how many people know the objectives of the junior college system. What do people in the community think about the issues of higher education and junior colleges? Is there a public education job to be done on principles?

Are there false rumors about curriculum or expenditures? Are there slanderous stories about students or faculty?

Is there confusion about some relatively simple point of fact? Are many of the people in the community unaware of some of the important community services offered by the college?

III—WHAT CHANGES SHOULD BE MADE IN THE COLLEGE'S POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN ORDER TO DISPEL JUSTIFIABLE PUBLIC OBJECTIONS?

Too often this is not recognized as an area of public relations, although it is the responsibility of the community relations director to inform college authorities of unfavorable public opinion. Where public misunderstanding exists, he will conduct a program of information. But where the negative opinion is even partially justified, he must suggest to the president the corrective action by the college which would dispel public objections.

For example, campus neighbors may be incensed about students parking in driveways. Improved policing of parking and efforts to provide more parking would restore public goodwill.

IV—WHAT RESOURCES OF BUDGET, FACILITIES, AND MANPOWER ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE COLLEGE'S PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM?

In the preceding steps of fact finding you have been determining what you would like to accomplish. Before you launch a comprehensive action program you must take the very practical step of determining just how much you can expect to accomplish. You must determine the scope of your program by facing the facts about budgets and available resources.

First, what are the initial budget allotments for the community relations program? What increases can reasonably be expected within a year or two, when the initial plan is operating and the value of additional attainable objectives can be demonstrated? What expenses can be carried by other college budgets or by outside resources?

Then, survey manpower. What is available? Who are the individuals who can be expected to participate substantially in the public relations program?

What are the facilities available, immediately and potentially?

Finally, after surveying what is available in budget, manpower, and physical facilities, list your shortages. How will you go about attaining what is needed?

If you have performed well in fact finding, you will be prepared to draw up an effective blueprint.

CHAPTER 4

FORMULATING THE BLUEPRINT—OBJECTIVES, ORGANIZATION, AND FACILITIES

A REALISTIC WORKING PLAN

Your individualized blueprint should be a practical operating guide, and certainly not a theoretical plan for an ideal organization and an ideal scope of activity. The importance of balancing ends and means is so great, we have not hesitated to repeat the point throughout this booklet. If you build a 10-ton tractor around a "jeep engine," you'll accomplish nothing. But if you build a "jeep" around that "jeep engine," you'll have a "machine" which can accomplish wonders.

Proper evaluation of the balance of ends and means in the public relations plan is one of the most crucial functions of the president. To change the metaphor, the president should load the public relations ship right down to the Plimsoll line, but he is headed for disaster if he adds cargo beyond that point.

This admonition does not mean to suggest that the planners should never raise their sights. The individuals close to the operating level certainly will see many opportunities for the profitable expenditure of additional resources, and these should be brought to the attention of budget making authorities. But failure to achieve additional budget calls for the exercise of patience and understanding. Operations personnel need to appreciate that the school's total budget is certain to be limited and cannot exploit all opportunities, no matter how justifiable.

Thus, in formulating the blueprint, prepare two plans. The first should be for immediate operation. The second should present an up-graded program showing the additional objectives which could be achieved with additional resources.

Constant budget-mindedness is a very salutary attitude. A capable community relations director will see many more opportunities for worthwhile activity than he has the budget to exploit, and thus will be forced to re-examine and reject less productive activities in favor of the more promising.

In drawing up the blueprint and in carrying out the program, each step should be tested with the question: "What difference would it make in achieving ultimate objectives if this activity were eliminated entirely?" Such a hard headed policing of the program not only will achieve maximum results with the available budget, but should also inspire the confidence of budget makers—thereby producing additional resources.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE TARGET

Maintain a clear understanding of objectives and a determination to accomplish them. Concentrate on content and motivation. Differentiate carefully between ends and means, between objectives—both long term and short term—and the mechanics of accomplishing them. Don't become so immersed in mechanics that activity becomes an end in itself.

Although important, the exercise of professional knowledge and experience in the techniques of communication is no assurance the program will be successful. Keep your eyes on objectives and navigate expertly toward them.

Part of the blueprint, therefore, must be a formal statement of the college's public relations goals, including some indication of priorities. The statement should also contain a declaration of the college's public relations philosophy, in order to give permanent prominence to the public service responsibilities and high ethical level of the program.

SUGGESTED STATEMENT

The following is a suggested statement of objectives and philosophy which each college can adapt to suit its own situation.

The statement should be amplified with a listing of specific objectives based on the fact finding project described in Chapter Three.

EXAMPLE

I. The community relations program of _____ Junior College seeks to develop and maintain a clear and complete public understanding of the objectives, activities and benefits of the educational program of the College so as to assist the College in fulfilling its function in the community.

II. As a two-way channel of communication between the College and the community, the community relations program is further designed to advise College authorities on community needs and opinions so that the College can best serve the community and its individual members.

III. The community relations program must always be conducted according to the highest ethical standards and in harmony with the public service responsibilities of the College.

IV. The primary objectives of the Junior College community relations program are:

(a) To gather and disseminate all relevant information about the College in recognition of the principle that in a political and social democracy the public is entitled to be fully informed about public institutions.
(b) To increase public recognition of the College's superior levels of instruction—both academic and vocational.
(c) To enhance the prestige of the educational program.
(d) To enhance the prestige of the faculty.
(e) To enhance the prestige of the students.
(f) To deepen public appreciation of the College's direct cultural and recreational contributions to the community.
(g) To promote public understanding of how economically the College functions as a key factor in the system of higher education.

V. Among the specific objectives are the following (listed in first, second and third priority groupings):

FIRST PRIORITY:

(a) To inform taxpayers' associations, Chamber of Commerce members, and other business and civic groups of the efficiency and budget controls of the College's administration.
(b) To inform high school seniors and high school faculty of the excellence of the College's instruction.

SECOND PRIORITY:

(a) To develop community interest in evening courses.
(b) To develop closer ties between vocational-technical courses and related industries.

THIRD PRIORITY:

(a) To increase community attendance at sports events, student dramatic and musical productions, etc.

ORGANIZING CHANNELS OF "COMMAND" AND COMMUNICATION

Part of the blueprint is an organizational chart to indicate the principal formal channels of "command" and communication, the general areas of responsibility, and the individuals charged with the responsibility.

The chart is a practical operating guide for the public relations program. If the public relations committee is well chosen, the chart may be adequate if it merely shows how the members of the committee and their respective staff people fit into the public relations operation.

Thus, a much simplified chart of an abbreviated public relations committee might be as shown on the following page. In practice, responsibilities would be delegated according to the size of the college and the talents and interests of the people involved. For one example, the catalogue shown under Public Information could be the entire responsibility of the Dean of Instruction.

PRESERVE ENTHUSIASM AND INITIATIVE

In drawing up the chart to fit your situation, avoid the entanglements of trying to show all the administrative relationships in the college. An involved chart following administrative lines not only would be valueless, it also could be misleading. In reality, the force of a successful public relations organization does not derive from authority but from persuasion and the intangible influences which motivate voluntary and enthusiastic cooperation.

A successful program is characterized by spontaneous expressions of good public relations by dedicated individuals both inside and outside the college.

The public relations job is so extensive that the bulk of objectives can be achieved only if practically everybody connected with the college is on the public relations team. Some contributors may have developed informal, independent activities which should be left undisturbed when the college's public relations program is intensified and broadened. Recognize the personality factors involved, and don't discourage individuals who have developed personal pride, interest, and enthusiasm over their pet projects. Coordination does not mean centralized administration.

Over organization of the areas of authority can destroy productive activity. There is a deceptive allure about strict channels of authority. They seem to simplify administration, but too often they merely destroy spontaneity and initiative and result in the program becoming devitalized and sterile.

GATHERING INFORMATION

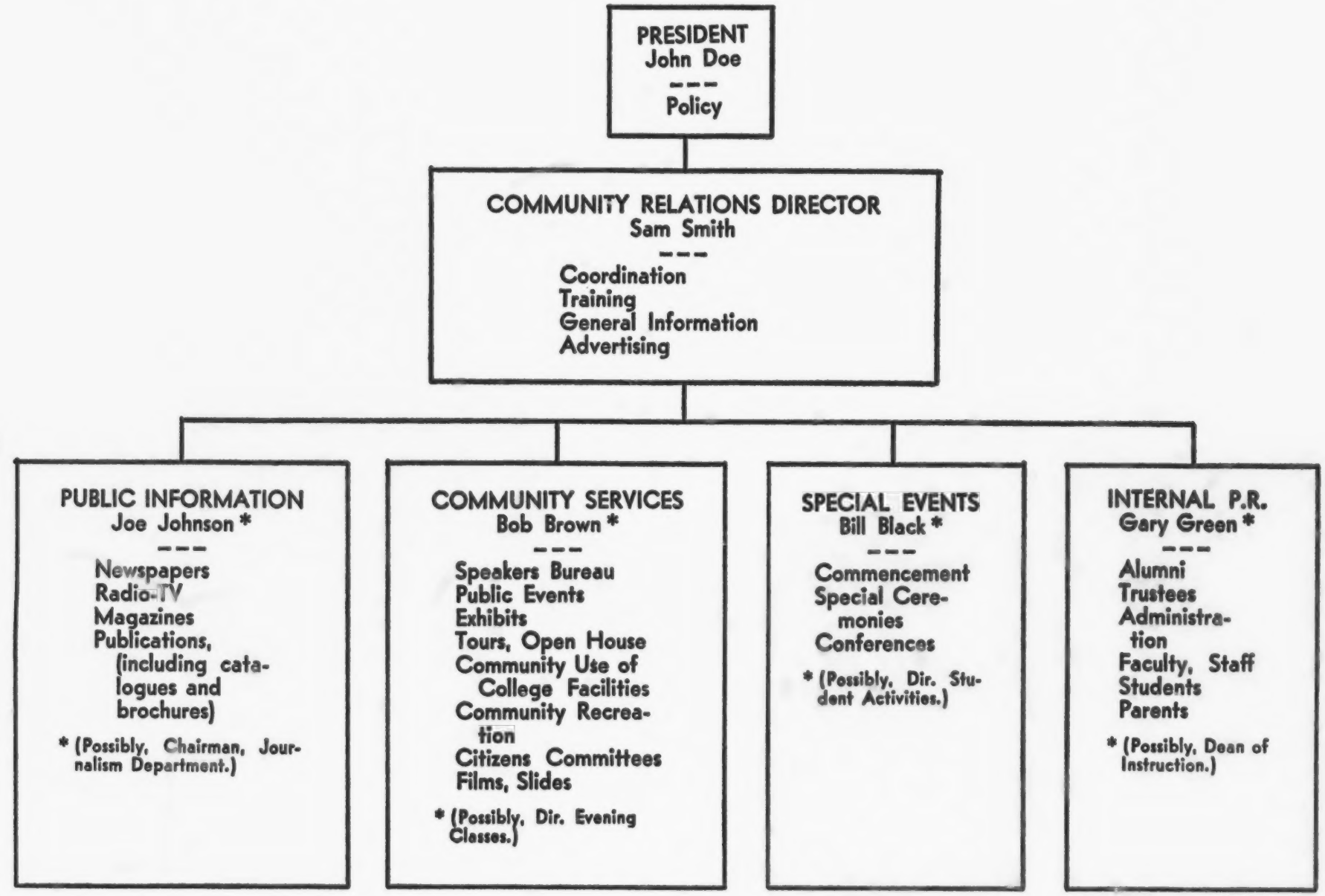
Organization for accumulating information is even more difficult than organization for disseminating it. The initial effort must come from the extended branches of the organization, rather than from the director.

As the chief contact between the press and the college, and as the coordinator of the various public relations activities, a director of community relations needs to know what is going on throughout the college—and he should be one of the first to know.

Yet, because of lack of understanding of the significance of a situation or simply because of inertia on the part of the individuals involved, important information frequently is not passed on.

The meetings of the public relations committee are not frequent enough to insure a complete report of important current news. But the members of the committee should be alert to their function as individual reporters, responsible for whatever happens within their sphere of operation.

Again, the practical solution lies primarily in such informal arrangements as personal encouragement of good news sources (including members of the com-


PRESIDENT
John Doe

Policy
COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIRECTOR
Sam Smith

Coordination
Training
General Information
Advertising
PUBLIC INFORMATION
Joe Johnson *

Newspapers
Radio-TV
Magazines
Publications, (including catalogues and brochures)
* (Possibly, Chairman, Journalism Department.)
COMMUNITY SERVICES
Bob Brown *

Speakers Bureau
Public Events
Exhibits
Tours, Open House
Community Use of College Facilities
Community Recreation
Citizens Committees
Films, Slides
* (Possibly, Dir. Evening Classes.)
SPECIAL EVENTS
Bill Black *

Commencement
Special Ceremonies
Conferences
* (Possibly, Dir. Student Activities.)
INTERNAL P.R.
Gary Green *

Alumni
Trustees
Administration
Faculty, Staff
Students
Parents
* (Possibly, Dean of Instruction.)

mittee), and cultivation of such "grapevine message centers" as the coffee break, the lunch hour and corridor chats.

And how would you include these on an organization chart?

FACILITIES—"FOR LOSS OF A NAIL. . . ."

A public relations program requires material facilities as well as thoughtfully conceived plans and competent people. Typically, manpower is the most expensive ingredient in a public relations operation. Yet, too often, costly manpower is rendered inefficient by the absence of relatively inexpensive material facilities. Too often, a project long in preparation proves unproductive because of lack of some facilities at a crucial time.

One of the most essential facilities in the program is the community relations office. Let us examine some of its requirements.

The community relations office should be located close to the president of the college because the work involves constant consultation and exchange of information. The director of community relations should be as conveniently available to the president as his secretary.

The community relations office is best located if it is in the traffic stream for convenient exchange of information and consultation with faculty and students.

The office should have space for desks, huge work tables, filing cabinets, locked storage for cameras and photographic supplies, shelves for books and magazines, and card index files.

If the community relations director does not have at least one full-time secretary-assistant, there is danger he will be so immersed in clerical work and administrative details that he will have little time to devote to creative public relations activities. Where budgets are very limited, it takes unusual initiative, great ingenuity and a strong sense of objectives to rise above sterile routines and achieve constructive results.

Part-time and student manpower can be a valuable supplement to a permanent, full-time organization which provides continuity and coordination.

Typewriters are required by each writing member of the office. Most directors of community relations use a typewriter, rather than a dictating machine. The secretary should have an electric typewriter.

The office requires a duplicating machine, or first priority and easy access to one which is not in constant use.

The mailing facilities of the college probably include addressograph machines, folding machines, and postage meters, all of which should be available to the community relations office.

CHAPTER 5

FORMULATING THE BLUEPRINT—A CHECK LIST OF ACTIVITIES

A REALISTIC WORKING PLAN

To repeat, the blueprint is a working plan. It does not have to contain all you know about public relations or all you would like to do but obviously cannot accomplish.

In listing activities, therefore, be realistic. Set up a plan which can be accomplished with available resources—and be sure to leave some margins of time and budget for exploiting unforeseeable opportunities.

At the end of the year, the blueprint should be an important check list in the appraisal. Will you then be able to regard each item as thoroughly accomplished?

This chapter suggests the great variety of activities from which you can select a program to meet the needs and resources of your college.

In checking off items for your particular plan, you might also make a list of the kinds of activities you are forced to omit. If your resources are in fact inadequate, the list of omitted activities will help budget administrators (including yourself) to decide if additional manpower and funds are justifiable. Test the scope of your program by asking what difference it would make if the activities were omitted. On the other hand, if the omissions make no real difference in the achievement of ultimate objectives, the omissions are justified.

SEVEN AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

In order to provide some arbitrary framework, let us set up a check list of activities under the following seven areas of opportunity:

1. Administration
2. Instruction
3. Faculty
4. Students
5. Classified (Non-Certificated) Personnel
6. College Events
7. Community Services

Note that "Publicity" is not listed as an area of opportunity, because it is a *means* of communication—like the telephone, public addresses, posters or personal conversation—applicable to all college activities. Too frequently—with disastrous results on the community relations program—"publicity" is equated with "public relations." To take another analogy, it is as though the president of a railroad were to take the attitude that the function of a railroad was merely to run trains back and forth, when it is much more to the point to emphasize that the function of a railroad is to transport goods and people back and forth.

On the other hand, let us not forget that publicity is one of the most forceful instruments of a public relations program. Particularly in limited programs, it may occupy the majority of the time of the available manpower. Publicity as a vital tool of public information should not be subordinated, but its function must be clearly understood as not an end in itself.

AREA 1: ADMINISTRATION

In the administration area, public relations personnel may have the opportunity to:

(a) Provide counsel to the board of trustees, president, administrators, department heads, faculty, students, classified personnel, citizens' groups, etc., on present and potential public relations problems.

(b) Help promote good personal relations in all public contacts, especially by telephone operators, receptionists, student clerks, ushers, and cafeteria and custodial personnel. (Human relations are as important as information in a public relations program. Faculty-student relations, even in class, have public relations aspects.)

(c) Promote constructive morale and loyalty among college staff and students by suggesting needed improvements.

(d) Handle complaints, both from the community and the college.

(e) Keep both college and community informed of college schedules.

(f) Supervise college printing office and production of outside printing.

(g) Produce general information fact sheets, brochures, annual reports, calendars, directory, and faculty and community newsletters.

(h) Provide a clearing house for general information about the college, its history, present activities and plans.

(i) Maintain resources file on college information, including biographies, pictures, clipping file, mailing lists, resource publications.

(j) Produce and place advertising.

(k) Prepare and supervise displays in store windows, lobbies, fairs and expositions, and at education conferences.

(l) Serve as a consultant to the college newspaper, magazine, and college year book.

(m) Provide liaison and cooperation with citizens' committees, including those involved in political activity on behalf of the college.

(n) Maintain direct mail communication with a select list of community leaders.

(o) Develop personal contacts with community leaders.

(p) Determine public opinion on issues affecting the college.

(q) Assist all college departments with editorial, photographic, and graphic arts advice and assistance.

(r) Represent the college at appropriate public functions.

(s) Attend public meetings of the Board of Trustees and assist Trustees in attracting public participation.

(t) Handle public communications (newspapers, magazines, television, and radio) on such college news as budget, departmental reorganizations, board meetings, and new equipment.

AREA 2: INSTRUCTION

Particularly since the controversies regarding education have attracted public attention, there has been a marked increase in the amount of newspaper space devoted to what goes on in the classroom. At one time, school news was devoted largely to extracurricular activities and routine administrative reports of enrollments, graduations, and schedules, etc. Enterprise on the part of school news bureaus or newspaper reporters resulted primarily in personality profiles and human interest features which typically were not concerned with the dominant objective of advancing public understanding of the philosophy and functioning of the educational system.

There is an inherent difficulty in trying to get news media to publish substantial discussions of educational issues. News is primarily the report of an event. Unless the discussion is launched as an event, i.e., a speech or a published report, it is difficult for an editor to justify its publication. Even an interview or a column requires a "news peg" to qualify the discussion for publication in a

newspaper, and valid news pegs are not always available. Certainly, it would not be advisable to stir up controversy in order to gain entry to the newspaper.

Furthermore, newspaper space is limited, and reporters and editors rarely have the time to acquire a depth of understanding of some of the most crucial issues.

There is good reason to believe, therefore, that newspaper publicity is not the strongest channel of communication for involved educational issues. Usually, more direct and more selective channels will prove better suited for accomplishing the objectives of junior college public relations.

In the instruction area of activity, community relations personnel may have the opportunity to:

(a) Promote understanding of education issues among members of the faculty and the student body through special orientation lectures, assigned reading, newsletters, comments and discussion at conferences and in classrooms, and by personal conversation.

(b) Publicize academic achievements of faculty, students, and alumni as a reflection of the college's superior instruction.

(c) Include among subjects dealt with by speakers' bureau an emphasis on the philosophy and functioning of junior college instruction.

(d) Clarify controversial areas of instruction at campus tours and open houses.

(e) Publish articles on curriculum and teaching methods in school and outside publications, particularly magazines.

(f) Promote television and radio panels and lectures on education. (Substantial discussion of educational issues is more easily absorbed in verbal than in written form.)

(g) Follow up by letter or in person to correct individual expressions of misunderstanding of junior college instruction.

(h) Demonstrate the excellence of occupational instruction through displays and through competitions with commercial producers.

AREA 3: FACULTY

A high caliber faculty suggests a high level of instruction. Therefore, most of the community relations activity with the faculty is for the purpose of building public appreciation for the college's instruction.

An important second objective is that of building prestige for the faculty itself in order to attract and hold a superior staff.

In this area, public relations personnel may have the opportunity to:

(a) Prepare biographical and achievement profiles of individual faculty members for publication in school and outside printed media.

(b) Encourage faculty members to take part in television and radio programs dealing with their fields of knowledge.

(c) Encourage faculty members to participate in professional societies, trade groups, and business conferences, and publicize recognition of faculty members by professional groups.

(d) Hold faculty conferences on community relations.

(e) Hold orientation meetings and social gatherings of new faculty.

(f) Form and coordinate faculty speakers' bureau.

(g) Provide public relations counsel in connection with faculty club, and faculty dining room and faculty lounge.

(h) Promote morale- and prestige-building activities for faculty families.

(i) Encourage development of traditions and ceremonies which build faculty prestige and esprit de corps.

(j) Keep faculty informed ahead of general public and students on all school news and schedules, in order to give recognition to leadership position of the faculty and help minimize rumors.

AREA 4: STUDENTS

What the students know and think about the college spreads quickly throughout the community. The opinions of students carry weight as "first hand information" with the people in the community, many of whom may have no other contact with the college.

The student's reports about the college usually dominate his family's thinking on the subject and they in turn relay their information and opinions to others.

To estimate the number of persons upon whom the student body has a direct impact, you can reasonably multiply the number of students by 20 to 50. To estimate the secondary impact, multiply the result by 5 to 10. A college with a total enrollment of 2,000 might count up to 100,000 persons directly influenced by its students, and a total of a million at the secondary level. There is no channel of communication to equal the students themselves.

In the student area of activity, public relations personnel may have the opportunity to:

(a) Encourage understanding by students of the objectives, history, philosophy, and operations of the junior college and its role in education and society. It also might be an objective of each instructor to discuss method, techniques, and values of particular subjects being studied.

(b) Encourage and coordinate student speakers' bureau.

(c) Welcome new students by means of orientation brochures, lectures and special affairs.

(d) Supervise student news bureau, which supplies assistance to college publications and community information office, and includes student news bureau representatives of various off-campus publications.

(e) Promote and coordinate Student Days, in which students take over operation of community government, business enterprises, trades and professions.

(f) Provide public relations counsel to student government on campus.

(g) Produce publicity on student achievements, both academic and extra curricular.

(h) Produce human interest stories about students.

(i) Promote and publicize student clubs and groups: sports, drama, music, art, radio, etc.

(j) Publicize interesting vacation activities of students.

(k) Poll student opinion to guide public relations program, and publicize constructive results.

(l) Gather and publicize news about alumni, both on campus and in community press. (Emphasize reports of achievement which reflect superior preparation received in junior college.)

(m) Prepare newsletter for alumni.

AREA 5: CLASSIFIED (NON-CERTIFICATED) PERSONNEL

Mention has already been made about classified (non-certificated) personnel as representatives of the college in contact with the public. Classified personnel also are an important public themselves, because they too carry first hand information and impressions about the college to their families and friends.

In the area of classified personnel, the public relations staff may have the opportunity to:

(a) Encourage understanding about the college and its role in education and society.

(b) Promote good morale.

(c) Prepare human interest publicity about unusual individuals and occupations.

AREA 6: COLLEGE EVENTS

College events are the easiest to publicize, although they rarely carry significant messages in themselves. In this area the efforts of the community relations office could easily become superficial, because even a surface report of a newsworthy event will warrant newspaper space.

Without crossing the boundaries into "editorializing," you can interpret and highlight significant aspects of events. However, thoughtful public relations starts in the planning of an event in order to bring to the surface underlying significance. Too frequently, for example, visitors at an open house wander about looking at brick and mortar. As a climax, coffee and cookies are served to win goodwill. Instead, the same event could emphasize such a theme as, "Educated Students Are Our Most Important Product." And principles of instruction could be demonstrated as a special feature of the open house along with displays designed to prove the school's superior achievements.

In this area, community relations personnel may have the opportunity to:

(a) Provide counsel and assistance in the public relations aspects of graduation ceremonies, registration, general assemblies and other events which are part of the college's educational and administrative operations.

(b) Assist with public relations aspects of open houses and campus tours for students' families; high school students, families and teachers; alumni; professional groups; community neighbors; business and industry groups.

(c) Provide public relations assistance for exhibits, plays, concerts, lectures, motion pictures, sporting events, school bazaars and fairs.

(d) Provide publicity on all college events.

(e) Provide assistance in preparation of posters, announcements, and programs.

(f) Supervise college athletics news bureau, when it is separate from the general college news bureau.

AREA 7: COMMUNITY SERVICE

The fact that junior colleges are known as community colleges points up the close relationship between the college and the community.

One aspect is the concept of life-long learning and the extensive community service programs carried on by junior colleges. In addition, the very organization and administration of the junior college is within the community. The whole tone of the college is local, and it is part of the public relations task to further the identification of local residents with the college.

In this area, community relations personnel may have the opportunity to:

(a) Encourage faculty and students to contribute their special talents and participate generally in community drives for charities, civic betterment, citizens' committees on civil problems, and community conferences.

(b) Provide college facilities for community meetings, conferences, special activities (the pool for Red Cross swimming lessons, for example.)

(c) Coordinate the college's participation in such community events as county fairs, historical pageants, dedications, and ceremonials.

(d) Encourage faculty and students to participate in community sponsored radio and TV programs.

(e) Sponsor and organize community events and cultural activities.

CHAPTER 6

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF COMMUNICATION

BROAD TECHNICAL COMPETENCE VALUABLE

The qualified community relations director should have a full kit of tools, and he should know how to use them.

Although the techniques of communication are not an end in themselves, and the program must keep focused on ultimate goals, details of operation often are crucial. It is not uncommon for major programs to fizzle because essential details were overlooked or incompetently handled.

Newspapers, television and radio come readily to mind as the major media of mass communication. For the purpose of achieving the college's objectives, however, the Big Three may not always be the most effective tools. Often the nature of the message does not lend itself readily to these media, where there is rarely assurance that the message will be relayed completely or with its original emphasis. For this reason, advertising is often utilized for institutional messages in order to retain control of these factors.

In this section, therefore, we emphasize the primary role of the Big Three, but we also note the many other tools of communication, each of which may prove best for a given purpose.

We do not have space for an elaborate handbook treatment of techniques.

The probability is that the individuals concerned with the college's community relations program are already reasonably familiar with the most common techniques of communication. Publicity is often under the chairman of the journalism department. The chairman of the radio and TV department may also be directly concerned with the public relations program.

If individuals in charge of public communications are not already reasonably familiar with the field, they should equip themselves for their tasks. At the least, they should familiarize themselves with the contents of books on the subject readily available in the college or community library.

SOME TIPS ON TOOLS

The following comments merely highlight tips which sometimes are forgotten even by professionals:

NEWSPAPERS: Establish close personal relations with editors and reporters in order to keep sensitive to news values as *they* see them. Have newspaper friends you can call upon for advice when you have unusual problems. Use of clipping service often can indicate the effectiveness of a publicity program and reveal developments in other schools.

RADIO AND TELEVISION: Both of the broadcasting media are required to devote a portion of their time to public service. The stations usually are eager to get stimulating local panels, interviews, lectures, and demonstrations of an educational nature. But remember that neither the station nor the college benefit from programs too dull to attract and hold worthwhile audiences. When they have nothing better to substitute for the public service requirement, stations will sometimes allow a dull program to continue if it is not troublesome. The initiative for upgrading the program must then come from the college.

Unless such programs are part of the learning process for students and there is a surplus of manpower available, be very critical of programs which require a great deal of expense and time on preparation of scripts and rehearsals. Be sure the results in terms of audience size and reaction justify the expenditure.

It may be that you can get more mileage by using the same amount of total time, talent, energy, and budget on a number of more informal and more extemporaneous programs.

And help the station build an audience for your program through college publications, announcements, bulletin boards, etc.

Be sure to include radio and TV for publicity releases and spot announcements.

SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS: Faculty and students are your primary public. School publications are not only read by everybody on campus, but they are carried home to be read by families.

VERBAL ANNOUNCEMENTS: For very brief information, verbal announcements are excellent because they get full attention. Use them not only within the school, but also when appropriate at service clubs and fraternal meetings. The program chairman will be pleased you thought of his organization. He's also the fellow you want for your speakers' bureau contact.

SPEAKERS' BUREAU: Program chairmen are constantly under pressure to find adequate speakers. There is probably no better way to relay a substantial message about education and the college. "Mechanize" this operation or it will be too time consuming to be sustained. Work up a mailing form that supplies all the information a program chairman would need, including subjects, speakers' names, and brief biographies. Suggest to your speakers that they keep to a standard talk which will not demand too much extra preparation for each appearance. Get a report on results and reactions of the audience. Standardize releases if possible.

BROCHURES AND LEAFLETS: Information for which there is repeated demand should be printed for easy distribution. A leaflet history of the college, for example, could be distributed to speakers' bureau audiences. Also use printed materials of this sort in direct mail and in occasional correspondence by faculty and staff.

DUPLICATING: Where costs dictate, the cheaper methods of printing must be used. However, the entire effort can be wasted and an impression of incompetence planted if the duplicating job is not easy to read. A very common fault is the blurred mimeographed memo. Who wants to read 10 or 20 pages typed single space and printed on paper which bleeds through from the reverse side? We have all seen instances where the stencils were so poorly cut that the impression on all sheets was incomplete. Apply strict standards to duplicating machine work which is distributed to the public. The problem is rarely with the machines. Your duplicating machine operator is a valuable member of the public information team. Train him and reward him when he does well. An electric typewriter contributes professional appearance to mimeographing and offset printing.

BULLETIN BOARDS: Put automatic removal dates on everything that goes on a bulletin board. Police bulletin boards to prevent the clutter which obscures new notices. Make use of bulletin boards in public buildings, libraries, churches, supermarkets, factories, and offices.

HOUSE ORGANS: Make up a list of the employee publications in the area and poll the editors on their interest in receiving news and features about the college. Look for some noncommercial connections with the business involved, preferably through some instructional subject. You may be surprised at the degree of cooperation you'll find.

LECTURES: Formal lectures for the public, students, or campus staff present the story of education in a truly educational form. Make sure advance notice is sent to groups with a special interest in the topic.

PHOTOGRAPHS: It is true that a good photograph attracts more attention than a thousand words and can in itself communicate powerful messages, but there aren't many photographers who can produce outstanding pictures. Explore your resources of manpower and try to discover those of unusual talent who are capable of making a major difference in results whenever you use photographs.

The photographer-reporter combination is at best a compromise of necessity. Usually, it involves some sacrifice. A director of public relations who has to take his own publicity pictures is handicapped as a reporter and will be repeatedly limited as a prime mover of the program.

MOTION PICTURES: Motion pictures are expensive, even when they are not good. The public does not realize the high cost of even short films and inevitably will compare any low budget production with the best they have seen.

Poor motion pictures are a bore and result in a negative impression. A truly low-cost production that achieves quality and effectiveness is such an exception nobody can be confident of achieving it. The budget for a passable film starts at about $1,000 a minute.

The huge investment is then frozen unless there is additional budget for copies and for organizing showings to proper audiences. Most films become dated after a few years.

Production of motion pictures can be justified only when there are large potential audiences.

Occasionally, films made by others for broad circulation are suitable for carrying part of the message of the public relations program. Usually, rental on such films is low enough for you to use them extensively. Together with a localized lecture and some slides, your rented film may prove quite adequate for your purposes.

SLIDES: Well selected slides imaginatively worked into a lecture are an excellent method of illustrating your message. With some artistic talent and imagination, you may be able to produce some very effective results.

ART: Meaningful and tasteful illustration and layout give vitality to a publication. On major printing jobs, don't economize by bypassing a competent professional artist for layout, type, selection, and illustration.

POSTERS: There should be talent within the college to produce effective posters for limited use. See if the art department has some large frames for silk screening—and some talented volunteers. Keep the message simple and direct. For community wide use and large circulation requiring commercial printing, call in somebody with broad experience.

SPEECHES: Particularly when made by prominent persons, speeches can get the dividend of fairly extensive coverage in the newspapers. Distribute reprints of key talks to selected lists. The size of the initial audience may be small in comparison with the number of people the message reaches through the press and reprints. The by-product audience sometimes is the principal objective of a speaker.

ADVERTISING: To control the form of a message in mass media, it may be necessary to employ advertising. Obviously, the effectiveness swings on the quality of the advertising produced more than on the total circulation of the newspaper or broadcasting station.

DIRECT MAIL: Personal correspondence with influential individuals can have far reaching public relations benefits. The action of an entire group may hinge on a few individuals.

Impersonal, mass produced mailings of printed letters, newsletters, leaflets, etc., can be effective once the readership interest is established.

A regularly scheduled letter from the college could contain stimulating material, but don't underestimate the time and talent required to make the difference between a piece which is read and one which is instantly discarded.

SCHEDULES AND PROGRAMS: Campus neighbors want to know about interesting campus activities open to the public. Encourage their participation in campus events by distributing schedules and programs. You may be able to get them to pay a small fee for being included on a mailing list for announcements.

EXHIBITS: Be selective both about where an exhibit will be shown and about the exhibit itself. It takes an unusual display to catch the attention of the recreation-minded public at a county fair or celebration.

At professional conferences, the attitude may be more receptive to an exhibit containing substantial information.

WINDOW AND LOBBY DISPLAYS: Ingenious displays can be very effective in relaying a brief message in windows and lobbies of business establishments, libraries, schools and other public buildings. They may be a strong communicator on campus.

LOUDSPEAKERS: Sound trucks are forceful, but avoid being a public nuisance and check the local restrictions on their use in public places.

TELEPHONE: The telephone makes it possible for you to reach a number of people on a personal basis in a short time.

This is also a convenient, rapid way for polling opinion.

LUNCH AND DINNER MEETINGS: In small or large groups, the meet-and-eat session provides an opportunity for communicating a message in a favorable atmosphere of sociability.

The small luncheon meeting gives you the attention of a man away from the interruptions of his office.

CHAPTER 7

TRAINING

THE NEED FOR CONTINUING STUDY

The scope of education public relations is so vast and complex, probably nobody could know all there is to know in order to do the ideal job.

Not only is there the huge literature of education to absorb and scores of skills to learn in communications, but we finally find ourselves groping in the foggy areas of human psychology.

Nevertheless, every member of the public relations team can gain a good deal from study and thought. The planning process itself is very instructive. Perhaps the chief value of budget reports and a scheduled yearly appraisal of the program is that they inspire study and constructive thinking.

Since the success of the community relations program depends upon the content of the message, personnel concerned with the program must be familiar with the salient issues of education. They must be informed on the relevant facts and arguments. Of course, this is knowledge every educator should possess.

In addition, the public relations practitioner should be a craftsman. There have been numerous books and booklets written on various aspects of public relations and communications techniques. At the end of this booklet there is a brief list of related reading.

We cannot, however, expect everybody concerned with the college's public relations program to become involved in a course of study. For most of the public relations team, training will have to be initiated and conducted by the director of community relations.

Some colleges will not be of a size to appoint a community relations director and the training responsibilities will be carried out by the president.

Once the director has set in motion a sound, basic working program, his efforts will tend to turn increasingly toward training and stimulating other members of the public relations team.

Through memoranda, lectures, personal contacts, demonstrations, and recommendations on reading material, he should maintain an informal training program.

In some instances, the training will revolve around detailed standard operating procedures, such as instructions for telephone operators, receptionists, registration clerks, ushers, and student employees handling public inquiries.

In some cases, the director will conduct a formal course of instruction in journalism or public relations. In addition to the registered students, members of the public relations team could attend.

And certainly, the director will find constant opportunities for the kind of casual, constructive comment which will develop the knowledge and skills of participants in the program.

CHAPTER 8

REVIEW, EVALUATION, AND REVISION

WHY REVIEW?

The community relations director is like a navigator who must regularly check his position and when necessary revise his course in order to reach his objectives.

Goals must be restated when problems change. The conditions under which the program operates are in constant flux. It is always possible that some of the directions set by the original plan were in error.

Regular evaluation reports, involving the entire public relations committee, should be scheduled in the basic plan. Because they will be held accountable, everybody concerned will tend to keep alert. The process of review, evaluation, and revision demands the kind of study and serious thought which almost inevitably insures increased productivity and efficiency.

Finally, regular reports will help develop realistic budgeting of resources. Evaluations which indicate that present funds are being well spent and that further opportunities exist tend to produce augmented budgets and manpower.

DIFFICULTIES OF EVALUATION

The ultimate effectiveness of a public relations program defies exact measurement. Appraisal is largely subjective and its accuracy depends greatly on the appraiser's knowledge of public relations operations.

Administrators experienced in the field know how easy it is to be impressed by the bright appearances of activities which are in fact worthless in terms of objectives achieved.

Polls which test before-and-after opinion or knowledge of key publics do not tell how much of the change was due to factors outside the program.

Furthermore, there is also danger that the reporting process can get so far out of hand that too large a proportion of available time is spent on maintaining statistical records and writing reports.

SEVEN APPROACHES TO EVALUATION

Although quick, objective evaluations may not be possible, there are procedures for checking the program.

They all, however, require the ability to make informed, intuitive judgments. Here are a few:

1. TANGIBLE CHANGES: Where a specific problem existed and no longer does, how much of the change can you attribute directly to the program? How much was due to secondary influences of the program? And how much of the "result" was as unwarranted as the rooster's claim to making the sun rise each morning?

2. COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS: Has there been a change in the pattern of phone calls and letters? Be careful not to place too much weight on a few strong expressions.

3. OPINION AND KNOWLEDGE POLLS: Within the informal and unscientific limits which are available to most schools for this purpose, certain kinds of polls can be helpful. Before and after a specific project with a specific public, test reactions and knowledge of facts. The poll itself can be an educational device helping to establish or clarify the facts in the minds of that public.

4. THE PLAN AS A CHECK LIST: As we suggested earlier in discussing the basic plan, the plan itself should provide a check list for the achievements at the end of the year. Were all the activities carried out? If not, why not? What other activities were added to exploit unforeseeable opportunities? In what ways were objectives achieved? What are the evidences?

5. STATISTICAL EVALUATION: There are no statistics which alone can prove achievement or failure. Properly interpreted and weighed, they contribute valuable supporting evidence. For example, the statistics of activities (contacts, calls, pieces of literature distributed, total audiences of speakers' bureau) tell something at least about the energy expended in the program.

There seems to be a tendency to place great significance on column inches of newspaper clippings received as the result of publicity activity. The clippings should be examined for content. The result could merely be greater public recognition of the college's name, or the great bulk of the clippings could even reflect continuing unfavorable attitudes which were kept on the surface by news stories reminding the public of objectionable events.

Not the bulk of the clippings but a thoughtful analysis of specific clippings can give a reflection of the results of the public relations program. Check to see how well the constructive message is retained in stories which have been altered by editors. Are editors favorable or critical in the way they write headlines and captions? Do they accept message lines, or are they generally blue pencilled?

6. INFORMED OPINIONS: One of the best methods of evaluation is to consult persons who are in a position to evaluate the reactions of special groups. The president of the chamber of commerce, for example, should be able to evaluate the reactions of his associates to particular aspects of the college's information program.

Needless to say, the evaluator must be able to segregate the letters which are merely formalities from those which reflect sincere belief. Sometimes a telephone call will help confirm or disprove the impressions of a letter.

7. ADEQUACY OF THE COLLEGE'S BUDGET: Perhaps the ultimate test of the college's public relations activities is the adequacy of the college's budget.

First, we must recognize that some communities may not be able to support all of the worthy and otherwise justifiable projects of the local junior college. But within the margins of what the community can afford, the approval of the college's budget requests will depend largely on what the community understands and feels about the college.

If the president's request for funds for a language laboratory or shop equipment is refused by the Board of Trustees, there may be considerable logic on his side if he calls the community relations director to task for not having performed his communications job adequately.

REPORTS . . . REPORTS . . . REPORTS . . .

In closing, it might be well to repeat the warning against setting up report requirements which divert 25-50 per cent of available time to preparing administrative reports. Also, be wary of establishing reporting methods and standards which tend to encourage activities primarily to satisfy appearances.

Reports are not the end product of a public relations program. Unless objectives are achieved, nothing worthwhile has happened. It would have been more sensible to have spent the time at a ball game.

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CHECK LIST

The following check list is intended primarily to stimulate further thought about some of the salient points touched upon in this guide. Page numbers are included for easy reference.

The list does not set up an absolute standard for all colleges, but provides a means by which each president or director of community relations can evaluate his own program. Periodic evaluation by the same individual should suggest the amount of progress achieved.

Points to Check	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Strong
1. The college's public relations policy recognizes that communication *from* the public is as important as communication *to* the public. (Page 1) ...			
2. College authorities recognize that the objectives of a tax-supported educational system in a democracy can be achieved only upon a foundation of effective public relations. (Page 1)			
3. All public relations activities are coordinated by one individual (i.e., the president or community relations director). (Page 5)			
4. The public relations director is "staff," not "line." (Page 5)			
5. A public relations committee meets regularly and assists the public relations director in planning, coordinating and evaluating the public relations activities of the entire college. (Page 6) ...			
6. Public relations and mass communications specialists in the community have been asked to serve on a Citizens' Advisory Committee. (Page 6) ...			
7. The community relations program seeks maximum results with available resources by concentrating on priority groups among the various "Publics." (Pages 7, 8)			
8. The community relations program is closely related to the college's objectives. (Page 10) ...			
9. The community relations program realistically considers budget limitations, available facilities, and manpower. (Page 11)			
10. The blueprint for the community relations program includes a formal statement of the college's public relations philosophy and goals. (Pages 12, 13)			
11. An organizational chart indicates the general areas of public relations activity and the individuals responsible for each area. (Pages 14, 15)			

Points to Check	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Strong
12. The community relations director has developed news sources which keep him fully informed of what is going on throughout the college. (Page 14)			
13. Material facilities (e.g., office space, typewriters, duplicating equipment, filing cabinets) are available for the public relations operation. (Page 16)			
14. Secretarial help is provided for the public relations director. (Page 16)			
15. The college makes a positive effort to promote good personal relations in public contacts of telephone operators, receptionists, student clerks, ushers, and cafeteria and custodial personnel. (Page 18)			
16. The college makes a positive effort to promote the morale of students, faculty and non-certificated personnel. (Pages 18-20)			
17. College publications such as brochures, reports, and newsletters keep students, faculty, and community well informed of campus events. (Page 18)			
18. The director of community relations maintains a resources file including general information on the college, student and faculty biographies, pictures, clippings, mailing lists, and resource publications. (Page 18)			
19. The director of community relations has established personal relationships with community leaders. (Page 18)			
20. An effort is made to promote understanding of issues about education among members of the faculty and student body. (Page 19)			
21. Achievements of faculty, students and alumni are publicized in order to emphasize the college's superior instruction. (Pages 19, 20)			
22. The philosophy and functioning of junior college instruction is communicated to the general public through such means as a speakers' bureau, campus tours and open houses, articles in outside publications, lectures, and television and radio panels. (Page 19)			
23. Displays in store windows, lobbies, fairs, and at open houses, etc., are used to emphasize the scope and excellence of junior college instruction. (Pages 18, 19)			

Points to Check	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Strong
24. Faculty members receive public recognition through speaking engagements and television and radio appearances. (Page 19)			
25. Faculty members participate in professional societies, trade groups, and business conferences. (Page 19)			
26. Faculty conferences on community relations are held regularly. (Page 19)			
27. Orientation meetings are held for new faculty members. (Page 19)			
28. Various activities promote the morale and prestige of faculty families. (Page 19)			
29. A positive effort is made to develop student understanding of the objectives, history, philosophy and operations of the junior college and its role in education and society. (Page 20)			
30. New students are welcomed to the college by means of orientation brochures, lectures, and special affairs. (Page 20)			
31. Activities of student groups are publicized. (Page 20)			
32. The community relations director provides general public relations assistance for all college events. (Page 21)			
33. Faculty and students participate in community activities for civic betterment. (Page 21) ..			
34. College facilities are used for community meetings, conferences, special activities, etc. (Page 21)			
35. The college actively sponsors community events and cultural activities. (Page 21)			
36. The community relations director has established close personal relations with editors and reporters. (Page 22)			
37. The college takes advantage of available radio and TV time by developing lively programs of an educational nature. (Page 22)			
38. Faculty and student speakers' bureaus have been "mechanized" to achieve maximum results at minimum effort. (Page 23)			
39. College publications (including those reproduced on duplicating machines) have a professional appearance. (Page 23)			

Points to Check	Needs Improvement	Adequate	Strong
40. Bulletin boards are attractive and up-to-date. (Page 23)			
41. Appropriate news and feature stories are sent to local employee publications. (Page 23)			
42. The community relations director has developed a reliable source of good photographs and makes use of other visual aids whenever appropriate. (Page 24)			
43. Direct mail is used as an effective means of communication. (Page 25)			
44. Schedules and programs of campus activities are distributed to the general public. (Page 25)			
45. The community relations director conducts a training program for other members of the public relations team. (Page 26)			
46. Regular evaluation reports are submitted by all members of the public relations committee. (Page 27)			
47. An effort is made to determine what results can be attributed directly to the public relations program. (Page 27)			
48. College initiated polls test the effectiveness of programs directed to specific publics. (Page 27)			
49. News clippings are thoughtfully analyzed for content. (Page 27)			
50. Influential people in the community are asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the program with special groups. (Page 28)			